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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

MOST OF AGRICULTURE'S REQUIREMENTS WERE INCLUDED in a list of 26 essential industries and services for which the Civilian Supply Allocation Division of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply on July 1 established a priority status for repair and maintenance materials. The priorities order is designed to "assure continued operation of essential industries and services which otherwise might have to curtail because of inability to secure needed repair or maintenance parts." Of particular interest to agriculture in the list of 26 essential industries and services are: "Farm equipment employed in farming operations"; "Food processing and storing"; "Production of chemicals" (for use in fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, etc.); "railroads"; "commercial operation of motor trucks"; "shipping, including ocean, lake, river, and canal commerce"; "petroleum production and refining"; and "electrical energy production and distribution" - all essential to the handling and distribution of agricultural products. Chief significance of the order is that it gives full recognition to the basic role agriculture is playing in the defense program.

POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTION OF MODERN WOOD PRODUCTS for many of the defense materials in which critical shortages exist is being explored. Recent discoveries have led to new and wider uses of wood. Plastic plywood offers the possibility of meeting the need of the aircraft industry for a material that will help alleviate the present aluminum shortage and the shortage of skilled metal workers. Manufacturers of training planes have been advised to start adapting their designs to some material other than aluminum alloys and wood and plywood are the materials to which they are turning. In manufacturing combat planes every effort is being made by the companies to make at least some parts of wood and plywood. Basic information about these materials enabling them to make the shifts is being provided as rapidly as possible by the Forest Products Laboratory of the U. S. Forest Service. A method of combining plasticizing and pressure has recently been devised whereby wood veneers can be converted into extremely dense, tough material, interchangeable with metal for propellers, radio masts, small fixed fittings, and beam reinforcements at fastening points.

A POWER LINE TO SERVE EGLIN FIELD has just been completed by The Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative of DeFuniak Springs, Florida. The Cooperative finished its construction as the airfield was ready to use current, thus preserving the REA record of meeting or beating deadlines established for supplying power for new military and defense facilities.

EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATIONS OF A WIDE VARIETY OF DRIED FOODS for emergency use are being launched by the Department. The investigations will cover not only some of the more commonly dried foods such as prunes and apricots, but also a wide

variety of gardenstuff - everything from dried beans and potatoes to tomatoes and spinach. Department officials point out that dried foods are far lighter and take up far less space than foods in other forms. These dried foods may be used for the armed forces, where supply lines may be cut, to meet shortages among the civilian populations both at home and abroad when transportation is upset, and to provide low-cost diets to improve the health of undernourished people. The studies will cover not only improved methods and equipment for dehydration, factors affecting color and flavor, and storage problems, but also two more recently recognized factors in dehydration: ways to preserve vitamins, and varieties of crops especially suitable for drying.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS

EGYPT: Newspapers in Cairo have published articles to the effect that negotiations are being carried on by an American businessman with the view to purchasing three million kantars (600,000 bales) of Egyptian cotton for the United Kingdom. British and Egyptian officials deny any knowledge of the matter other than that it has appeared in the press.

UNITED KINGDOM: The Ministry of Food announced that effective July 7 the weekly meat ration would be increased to 1s 2d (23.53 cents) for adults to 7d (11.76 cents) for children. This increase has been made possible by the exceptionally large quantities of frozen meat which have arrived from the southern hemisphere in the last few weeks. The Ministry believes that increased imports, together with expected home-produced supplies, will enable the meat ration to be maintained at the new level for some time without any reduction of reserves in cold storage. Regarding the prospective egg ration, the Ministry announced that there is every reason to hope that each domestic consumer will be able to obtain, during July at least, one egg per person weekly. In connection with an extra ration of sugar for household fruit preserving, the Ministry announced that the sugar ration will be doubled for each of the four weeks from June 30 to July 27, so that in effect there will be an extra allowance of two pounds of sugar for each ration book.

GERMANY: The only change in rations of principal foodstuffs for the period July 28 to August 24, 1941, is a reduction of 62.5 grams in the cheese ration, thus restoring the allotment of that item to the original 187.5 grams. The curd ration remains the same at 125 grams. All normal consumers, children and adolescents may again purchase 125 grams of rice instead of a corresponding amount of alimentary pastes. Consumers who are not self-providers may also take 125 grams of legumes in place of alimentary pastes. As in former ration periods 300 grams of the total ration of alimentary pastes may consist of products with a grain base. Effective July 28, 1941, an unstated number of the travel and restaurant bread coupons will be marked with the letter R, as has already been done in the case of the Reich bread cards. Coupons thus marked will only be valid for the purchase of rye flour products and mixed bread. Commencing June 1, 1941, rationing regulations in the General Government were extended to cover hotels and restaurants, and travel and restaurant cards have been issued for this purpose.

NEW ZEALAND: Acting Prime Minister last night announced details of the new Britain-New Zealand agreement for the disposal of the latter's primary products during the war and one year thereafter, excepting wool, for which the contract remains unchanged. Britain's purchases of all primary produce are now limited only by ships available. Prices and terms are to be arranged later. Annual quantity of cheese is raised to 160,000 tons from 107,000 tons commencing August 1941. Financing the acquisition and storage of reserve stocks pending disposal is shared equally by both governments.

